




**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT  
FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS**

**TIME MANAGEMENT**

**SEGMENT #1: DELEGATING TASKS TO PARAPROFESSIONALS**

-  **VIDEO SEGMENT TRANSCRIPT**
-  **PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**
-  **ANNOTATED RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY**



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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

A project administered by

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# Professional Development Toolkit for New and Beginning Teachers



The PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS is a research-based video streamed program with accompanying resource documents. The program is an outgrowth of a previous Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI) online mentoring study at Virginia Commonwealth University. The findings of the online mentoring study revealed twelve topics new and beginning teachers felt additional university training would have led them to more effective use of best practices in the classroom. In this program, each of the twelve topics is presented in two to six stand alone video segments. The total number of segments is forty five. Suggested uses, in addition to personal viewing by K-12 teachers for self improvement, include professional development, mentor and mentee, university prospective teacher, and small or large group training.

The facilitators are university faculty and practitioners with field experience. Each is currently involved in teacher training or serves as a staff development administrator. All are currently engaged in educational research, teaching and/or educational policy development.

The teachers in the video programs are classroom teachers. Some of them were participants in the 2006 Online Mentoring Study in which the topics for this project were identified. They represent all disciplines in K-12 grades.

Resource documents for the programs are provided as PDF files to facilitate the use of the 45 video segments. The first set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) an introduction to program facilitators, including a definition of each topic, and a list of the video segments, and (3) a research formative study summary that helped to guide the project's development. The second set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) a full text transcript for each video segment, (3) a set of problems and solutions related to each video segment in the form of a work-study guide, and (4) an annotated bibliographic summary of references and Internet links for each transcript. Many of the organizations and agencies referenced in the transcripts are actively involved in the development of video and professional development presentations that support policy and advocacy.

Every reasonable effort is made to present current and accurate information. Internet content, however, does appear, disappear and change over time. CEPI, as a university-based educational policy research institute endorses no specific position of any listed group.

## TIME MANAGEMENT

### SEGMENT #1: DELEGATING TASKS TO PARAPROFESSIONALS

#### VIDEO SEGMENT TRANSCRIPT

**Time Management:** Techniques that help with personal organization of schedules, setting of priorities, and carrying out of goals related to the job of teaching.

**Facilitator:** Dr. [Loraine Stewart](#), Associate Professor  
Department of Teaching and Learning  
School of Education  
Virginia Commonwealth University

AUDIO	VIDEO
<p>Delegating tasks to a paraprofessional such as a teacher's aide can sometimes be a major challenge for a new teacher because he or she is not comfortable giving "orders to adults", especially adults who have more experience in the education field. Nevertheless, delegating some responsibilities is essential in order to maximize instructional time for teachers.</p> <p>My name is Loraine Stewart. I am an associate professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Virginia Commonwealth University. I would like to share some time management strategies that can enhance the learning environment. In this segment, we will focus on delegating tasks and responsibilities to paraprofessionals.</p> <p>Learning to delegate tasks and responsibilities is a necessity for teachers who strive to be good time managers. These teachers are very thoughtful when it comes to maximizing the use of all professional and paraprofessional support personnel. Many early elementary teachers are assigned a paraprofessional but don't receive much information regarding their role and responsibilities or are not provided suggestions on how to maximize their skills and qualities. These valuable individuals can save a teacher an enormous amount of time, if properly used.</p> <p>If you are fortunate enough to be assigned a full- or part-time aide, be mindful to draw upon that person's special strengths and abilities. Far too often, aides are used as office assistants to make copies and run errands. Even though these are important tasks that are necessary for a class to function properly, skilled aides can perform many tasks beyond clerical and classroom upkeep duties.</p> <p>Aides can handle such tasks as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with small groups or tutor individual students</li></ul>	<p><b>DR. STEWART</b></p>

- Create instructional games that can be used to supplement upcoming lessons or provide remediation for struggling students
- Create and maintain meaningful current bulletin boards
- Monitor seatwork and learning centers
- Read stories to the class or to small groups
- Assist with administering and monitoring testing
- Assist with planning and chaperoning field trips, special programs, and class parties.

Frequently, unless the aide has previous experience, she or he looks to the teacher for directives on tasks to complete. If the teacher does not provide clear instructions regarding expectations and classroom needs, often the aide is underutilized leaving the teacher to complete the tasks the aide could have completed.

Let's hear how establishing rules and procedures and an organized classroom have impacted time management for our teachers.

My name is Ashley Mosier. I am in my first year of teaching sixth grade social studies and reading. As a new teacher, in the first few months, one of my biggest concerns was time management. I am quite the perfectionist, and I worried about my success as a teacher as I struggled to balance my time. It was difficult during these months to think about how I would or could use paraprofessionals. I knew once I got my hands around my job, paraprofessionals would be helpful, but timing and planning for their use was an important first step. For me, everything has to be just in time. Now, I feel that by planning ahead, creating an organized classroom and by establishing clear rules and procedures, I am able to manage my time very well. I look forward to getting paraprofessionals and the assistance they will provide. I attribute a great deal of my readiness to those first few weeks I spent learning to wisely manage my time and planning, planning and planning.

**ASHLEY MOSIER**

My name is Joe Crisp. I am a first year middle school PE and Health teacher. Aides have been useful to me as a teacher because they help maximize time for students with special needs. They facilitate learning by incorporating different strategies that I recommend to fit the individual needs of diverse learners. This allows me as the teacher to focus on the class as a whole while aides assist with individual or very small group activities.

**JOSEPH CRISP**

Each of our teachers has emphasized the importance of planning specific and meaningful activities for use of aides or paraprofessionals. Do you plan activities for and give clear instructions to your classroom helpers?

**DR. STEWART**

## PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

**Time Management:** Techniques that help with personal organization of schedules, setting of priorities, and carrying out of goals related to the job of teaching.

### **Ask yourself:**

Are you feeling overwhelmed by outside of the classroom responsibilities (paperwork, meetings, deadlines) that you have which keep you from being as effective as you could be? How do you spend most of the time during the day?

### **Suggested use for this module:**

#### **1. Analyze:**

Please select one of the scenarios below and problem-solve a list of possible solutions. Record your ideas in the space provided. Discuss these ideas with your other educators (mentor, colleagues, or other beginning teachers).

#### **2. View:**

Watch the corresponding video on this topic. How does this information change your ideas?

#### **3. Compare:**

Revisit the scenario selected. Next, review the section entitled, "Possible Solutions" comparing the ideas listed with your own list.

#### **4. Reflect:**

How will you apply this new information to your current or future classroom? What goal will you set to help you begin to change your practices? What support is needed to help you accomplish this goal?

#### **5. Apply:**

List the first step towards change below. Create a timeline for success and place deadlines in your personal planner as a reminder. How will you know when you have met your goals?

## **Scenarios 1 & 2: Time Management**

### **Scenario 1: Team Planning Meetings**

Mr. Isaic is a new teacher in a school in the Hampton Roads area. He has been hired to teach 4<sup>th</sup> grade. His team informs him that they will be meeting on Thursday during resource (45 minute block) and after-school (2 hours) each week to plan upcoming units. As a beginning teacher, he is thrilled to have the opportunity to get ideas from his co-workers. However, now that these meetings have been going on for

about a month, he is becoming frustrated. The amount of time required to meet is keeping him from getting everything done each week. The other teachers arrive late to the meetings and sometimes leave early. There are constant interruptions by the intercom and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. Lastly, it seems that the other teachers want to share worksheets rather than really plan for teaching the necessary content. He also feels like he has so little to contribute. How can Mr. Isaic improve these meetings?

## **Scenario 2: Excessive Demands**

It is hard to believe that it is interim time again. Ms. Gordon the new 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher at her middle school. How will she finish all her grading in time to send these reports home again next week? Since it is Tuesday afternoon, Ms. Gordon rushes back from her social committee meeting to supervise her students during an after-school cheerleading practice. The teacher copier has been broken all day and she is worried about when it will be fixed so that she can get her materials ready for Wednesday. As she sits in the bleachers in the school gym watching the team captain review a routing, she realizes that she is feeling really stressed. As she glances through her stack of mail sitting beside her, she finds a note from the assistant principal who is requesting that she turn in her interim progress reports for review by the end of the next day. How will Ms. Gordon be able to get everything done on time?

Circle the scenario that you selected below:

Scenario 1

Scenario 2

Record a list of your own possible solutions here:

Summary & Goal Setting:

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Begin by asking yourself: What tasks are you doing that you don't need to be doing? Experts suggest...

- Try not to take on too many extracurricular responsibilities during your first couple of years of teaching.
- Allow your students to take responsibilities for some tasks. For example:
  - Not every assignment needs to be formally graded, are you utilizing self-assessment and rubrics to help students learn and achieve your goals?
  - Could cooperative learning produce better results for some of your individual assignments?
  - What routines can be established to alleviate unnecessary loss of instructional time?  
  
(student work folders, less group bathroom breaks, welcome messages to get students started as they enter the classroom, better utilization of parent or community volunteers, curriculum review during wait time, absent basket for copies of missed work assignments)
- Work ahead rather than at the last minute. As educators, we must learn to be very flexible in our work tasks. Prepare for the next week of instruction at least an entire week ahead. It is hard at first, but becomes much easier with time. Advance planning allows you to avert crisis situations which arise in workplace environments (broken copiers, illness, enough time for finding and borrowing resources, last minute conferences, called faculty meetings) and you will still be highly effective in the classroom.
- Are there responsibilities that could be organized differently so that they require less time?
- Meetings and team collaboration take up a significant amount of your time, but this time is essential for sharing ideas and teaching strategies. As you attend various training sessions and meetings, keep your agenda/ planner up-to-date using the following strategies:
  - Take your planner with you to meetings record all events and deadlines in your planner as soon as they are announced. For larger tasks, create a timeline on your calendar to keep you on-track. A monthly planner may help you to visually "look ahead" at upcoming responsibilities.
  - Don't be afraid to ask colleagues or your supervisor to help you plan ahead for important upcoming deadlines. One suggestion is for administrators and new teachers to get together at least once each quarter to review expectations, share ideas, and 'look ahead' to upcoming events and deadlines.
  - Model what you value. Suggest to colleagues that you are all busy, so let's agree to some ground rules to keep us all on track during meetings and planning sessions (be



present, prepare ahead and carry out assignments, everyone participates actively, stay on the agenda, avoid complaining and finish the meeting on-time)

- Communication Skills

- Listen actively and carefully to students and parents, use I-messages rather than you-messages, meet regularly with your mentor for support, seek other 'helpful' colleagues with similar teaching philosophies to share and brainstorm your ideas with.

- Preventative Strategies

- Many problems arise as a result of student boredom which requires a significant amount of teacher time for responding. Eliminate these disruptions by enriching your classroom learning environment (create learning centers or stations, use visuals while teaching, add a library section for topics of study, provide meaningful tasks for when students finish work early, play appropriate music during independent work, rearrange the environment to prevent learning disruptions)
- Develop procedures so that students know what to expect. Post and model these procedures so that students can be self-sufficient. Where it is appropriate, implement an 'ask three, then me' policy.
- Focus on the positive. It takes less time and is more effective to reward those students who are complying than it will take to enforce a negative consequence. Point out what is going well and other students will want to imitate these behaviors.

## ANNOTATED RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ❖ Academic learning is influenced by the amount of time that students spend engaged in appropriate academic activities.

Brophy, Jere. (1986). *Research linking teacher behavior to student achievement: Potential implications for instruction of Chapter 1 students*. (ERIC Document Retrieval Service No. ED 293914)

- ❖ Teachers often fail to take into account the off-task time they devote to managing student behavior, managing classroom activities, and dealing with announcements and interruptions.

Brophy, Jere. (1986). *Research linking teacher behavior to student achievement: Potential implications for instruction of Chapter 1 students*. (ERIC Document Retrieval Service No. ED 293914)

- ❖ Time management techniques:

- Identify time robbers
- Learn to say "no"
- Enlist students to help with routine tasks
- Schedule, recoup time into your planning book
- Turn elephants into hors d'oeuvre (cut a huge task into small chunks so it seems less insurmountable)
- Fight procrastination (set priorities)
- Don't feel guilty

Parks, B. *Seven time-management sanity savers*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18, 2007, from <http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/classmgmt/timemanage.htm>

- ❖ As teachers become more and more accountable for student success, taking advantage of every minute of class time becomes crucial. Efficient use of class time can increase student performance and decrease teacher anxiety.

- Sample techniques include: lead-in activity (10 minutes), preview (5 minutes, lecture/notes (20-30 minutes), demonstration/group activity (15-20 minutes) and lesson overview (10-15 minutes)

Lucas, Curt. (2007) Time management. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18, 2007, from <http://www.education.ky.gov>

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